

WINTER COLLECTING OF COLEOPTERA

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The late winter and early spring months bring days of inactivity for many persons who collect beetles, but such need not be the case providing the collector is willing to limber up a few muscles. A very nice collection of wood-boring insects can be assembled from December to June by cutting the specimens from their pupal cells. Most of these insects transform during the late fall and remain in the pupal chamber until time for emergence in the spring or early summer.

It is quite impossible to give any quick and certain method for finding the specimens, instructions of "seek and ye shall find" being about the soundest advice that could be given. An axe and much persistence are the primary requisites.

Most of the species attainable will be found in dead scars on living plants or in plants that have been dead but a year or so. For the beginner, best success can be obtained by looking for dead areas on hard wood shrubs or deciduous trees and cutting away about two inches of the dead wood. Specimens are seldom found pupating deeper in the wood than this. One observation has been of special value. If exit holes can be found in the scar, especially if they are not more than a year or two old, chances are better than fair that further specimens will be found in the plant. Not all larvae mature in the same length of time, and the same trees are selected annually by the females for egg-laying. This is evident from the diverse size of the larvae occupying certain trees. It would appear that **these infested trees**, as a rule, are having a greater struggle to exist than are neighboring plants, and due to lack of vitality are selected by wood borers. This loss of vitality is quite probably present before the borers attack, but regardless of the cause, specific trees are chosen, often to the complete exclusion of others nearby.

The female deposits her eggs in crevices in the dead wood scars from where the larvae mine down into the heartwood. After completing the larval stage and preparing to pupate, a tunnel is dug close to the surface of the scar, usually somewhere near the edge, from where the adult cuts its way out. Where scar tissue extends to ground level or below, especially in desert regions, specimens will be found pupating only a short distance above the ground, and often tunnels lead some distance below the soil surface.

Desert and semidesert plants, as a rule, will produce very fruitful results for that person willing to expend the effort. But specimens will not be found restricted to desert plants. Trees of our forests having dead scar tissue, and those that have been dead from one to four years will often produce good results. In the higher mountainous regions, living trees with dead tops will also produce some nice and often unusual material.

Another very profitable procedure is to bring into the laboratory from collecting trips, limbs and pieces of wood found infested with larvae. If these are placed where they can be observed, as in flour sacks or paper bags and the specimens removed as they mature, some very nice things can be obtained. The writer has kept such material in the laboratory for seven years and specimens still continue to emerge. A number of uncommon species of insects have been obtained by this method.

As the collector becomes acquainted with the ecological relationships that exist, he will learn where to look, what to expect, and he will develop his own skills and abilities, at the same time becoming acquainted with the habits and life histories of each insect, which, in the end, is one of our primary goals, whether as a hobby or as a profession.

DEATHS

Reported by H. Klapperich
Bonn - Germany

F. Borchmann, Lehrer, Hamburg-Volksdorf, Germany, authority on the Lagriidae, Alleculidae and Meloeidae of the world, died 1943. His collection comes to the Hamburger Museum.

H. Eggers, Forstrat i.R., Bad-Nauheim, Germany, world authority on Scolytidae, died during the war. The greater part of his collection will go to the United States.

H. Gebien, Hamburg - Farmsen, Germany, world authority on Tenebrionidae, died ~~October~~ 9, 1947. His collection is in the Hamburger Museum and in the Frey Collection - München.

R. Heberdey, Dr., Zoolog. Institut of the University Graz - Austria, authority on the Anthicidae of the world, died April 17, 1945 in Italy. His collection is in the Naturhist. Museum, Wien I, Burgring, Austria.
